

Shaw Easter ‘Egg’stravaganza: plastic eggs to hunt, face-painting fun for children



Photos by Master Sgt. Greg Scott

Above, Amy, 7-year-old daughter of Chandra and Staff Sgt. Brad Clear, 20th Component Maintenance Squadron, and Daniel, 7-year-old son of Robin and Staff Sgt. Benjamin Merrill, 20th Logistics Readiness Squadron, prepare for the battle of the eggs. Right, Airman 1st Class Adam Mawhorr, 28th Operational Weather Squadron, paints the face of Gina, 8-year-old daughter of Staff Sgt. Cathy Boscoe, 20th Mission Support Squadron.



Left, Janine, 11-year-old daughter of Jennifer and Tech Sgt. Richard Bruce, 20th Civil Engineer Squadron, rips across the Sports Complex Field by Outdoor Recreation with her basket to gather plastic eggs at Shaw's Annual Easter Egg Hunt April 12.



War on terrorism has been a topic for discussion since September 11, 2001. Now that we are in conflict with Iraq, more public views are expressed on radio, TV and in plain conversation. Children listen to radio, watch TV and ask questions, but ...

What should America’s children know about war ?

By Staff Sgt. Alicia Prakash
Staff writer

Baghdad, bombs and Iraqi Freedom are prevalent words in recent weeks. No matter what realm of communication, children are bound to hear or see these words. When a child expresses interest in war, it opens the door for questions.

A child can hear about war through many avenues, to include other children. According to Patti Busser, 20th Medical Operations Squadron Family Advocacy outreach manager, a child needs to hear the truth about war from his parents.

Alicesia Thomas, school-age coordinator at the youth center, works with six to 12-year-old children.

“We don’t discuss war with the children,” said Thomas. “We will listen to them tell us their feelings about war.”

Some children express their feelings through

writing or drawing pictures.

“Kids trust their parents,” said Busser.

A parent is typically more aware of how much information the child can process. Because of that, there is no designated age when a parent should discuss war with their child.

Though there isn’t a magic number for elementary school-age children, parents are encouraged to stick with the basics and only answer the questions the child asks, with few details. As soon as the question is asked, answer it honestly.

For older children, a parent should bring up the subject. Some children may be afraid to discuss war, so the parent must initiate the conversation, said Busser.

“Discussing the war is a great opportunity to talk to your kids,” she said.

Parents should not make promises about deployments or war to children, said Busser.

“Don’t say ‘of course’ to your child,” said Busser.

A deployed parent should stay in touch with and let his child know he misses him. He should tell his child he will try to come home soon and is doing everything to help America and his family.

Explain to them America has been in conflict with other countries before and got through it. Younger children are more focused on how the war will affect their family, said Busser.

Allow your children, ages 10 and up, to help with charities and community service. They can do yard work for deployed spouses and write letters. Getting them involved gives them a sense they are helping out, said Busser.

For help with talking to your children about war, call Family Advocacy at **895-6091**, Family Support Center at **895-1252** or the chaplain at **895-1107**.

A Kid’s Deployment Workshop for elementary school-age children who have a deployed parent is set for Tuesday at the Family Support Center from 6-8 p.m. There will be activities and games to help children adjust to being separated from a parent. Registration required. Call Patti Busser at **895-6091** to register.

‘Children don’t deserve mistreatment’

By Tech. Sgt. Chuck Hinrichs
Staff writer

Shaw has a low number of child abuse incidents compared to other military installations or the local civilian community, base social workers said – but even one abused child is too many.

“No child deserves to be hurt,” said Jim Thomas, Family Advocacy treatment manager. However, there were 35 cases of child abuse on base in the past year.

“We aren’t talking about spanking,” said Thomas. “These are substantiated incidents of maltreatment,” he added.

Maltreatment occurs in several forms, including physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect, according to Patti Busser, Family Advocacy outreach manager.

Some people don’t know what to expect in child rearing, and unrealistic expectations can lead to abuse, said Busser. Parents need to know the difference in physical limitations and behavioral issues, as well as the normal stages children go through.

Program goals on base are to raise awareness of child abuse and reduce the risk of family abuse through education and support, said Busser.

“We want our clients to know there is someone to talk to who understands parenting issues,” said Busser.

Parents may get to a point they can’t handle life’s stress, then a child enters the situation and gets hurt, she said. In fact, 99 percent of child abuse cases are not intentional, she said. But, if caregivers cross a line in the name of discipline and injure a child in any way, intentionally or not, that constitutes abuse, and it’s against the law, said Busser.

Maltreatment is defined as the non-accidental use of physical force on the part of a caregiver,

resulting in physical injury, or with potential for physical injury and more than inconsequential fear, Thomas explained.

Physical force includes, but is not limited to, slapping, punching, kicking and pushing, said Thomas. Although, many acts may not result in injury, the potential for injury exceeds acceptable levels, and are therefore abusive, he added.

While abuse often leaves visible evidence on the child, it may also lead to psychological damage, according to Thomas.

And, abuse doesn’t always have to be physical, it may be emotional, said Busser.

Family Advocacy determines emotional abuse using a grading system of several factors, such as resulting stress disorders, fear reaction, potential for psychological harm and significant disruption of a child’s physical, mental or social development, said Thomas.

Examples of emotional abuse include berating, disparaging or humiliating a child. Thomas said threatening to harm or abandon a child is emotionally abusive as is threatening to harm a child’s loved one, pet or property. Restricting children’s movement by tying them up or confining them to a closet also has a psychological impact. Any disciplinary act, used excessively, in frequency or duration,

whether physical or not, may inflict emotional damage, said Thomas.

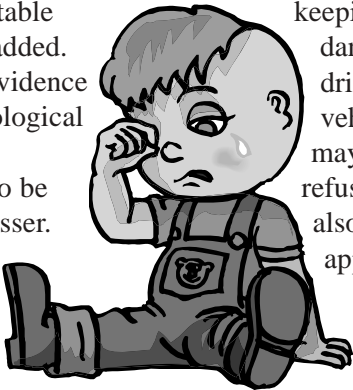
The other aspect of maltreatment is neglect, which entails the blatant lack of supervision, with respect to a child’s age, or inattention to safety by exposing a child to physical hazards. They include

keeping loaded guns, illegal drugs and dangerous pets in the home, as well as driving while intoxicated with a child in the vehicle, explained Thomas. He said people may neglect children’s educational needs or refuse to provide for medical care. Neglect also includes depriving children of age-appropriate food, shelter and clothing.

While the numbers of cases involving these abuses are low at Shaw, Thomas reiterated “children don’t deserve mistreatment.”

Busser agreed, saying there are many resources available to help parents. The following agencies are available for more information, education, personal counseling and social activity: Chaplain, **895-1104**; Family Advocacy, **895-6201**; New Parent Support Program, **895-6091**; Child Development Center, **895-2247**; or Family Support Center, **895-1252**.

There is always somewhere to turn before harming a child, said Busser. And, it’s everyone’s responsibility to prevent child abuse.



Hard Facts

- ◆ Three children die every day as a result of child abuse or neglect. Approximately 2,400 children were found to be victims of abuse in the United States each day in the year 2000.
- ◆ Abuse and neglect are associated with short- and long-term consequences, including brain damage, developmental delays, learning disorders, relational problems, aggressive behavior and depression.
- ◆ Survivors of abuse and neglect may be at greater risk for problems later in life – like low academic achievement, drug use, teen pregnancy and criminal behavior – impacting the child, family and society as a whole. *(Information courtesy of the United States Department of Health and Human Services)*



Spirit Spotlight



Airman 1st Class Taelisha Lacy

Organization: 20th Maintenance Operations Squadron
Duty title: Maintenance scheduler
Hometown: Louisa, Va.
Time in service: Two years
Off-duty interests: Reading and spending time with my family
In her own words: “Never give up.”